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SUBJECT: NAS PANAMA MONTHLY REPORT AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENTS: JULY
2007

¶1. (U) This cable provides a brief overview of NAS/Panama activities and law enforcement and counternarcotics developments during July 2007.

PENDING GOP INITIATIVES

¶2. (SBU) Issues we have been following closely -- rollout of a coast guard service, reorganization of the Technical Judicial Police (PTJ), and reforms to the criminal procedure code -- were on stand-by during the month of July, largely owing to the local congressional recess. On the positive side, the Ministry of Government and Justice (MOGJ) gave the green light to signing an inter-institutional agreement solidifying the role of the NAS-financed Joint Intelligence Coordination Center (JICC). The JICC serves as a center for information sharing and requests regarding major crime issues. We expect the signing ceremony to take place in the near future.

CNIES - NOTAM STILL PENDING

¶3. (SBU) NAS and ECON reached out on several occasions to senior officials at both the MOGJ and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to reiterate the requirement that a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) be issued in order for the USG to reestablish the suspended Cooperating Nation Information Exchange System (CNIES) feed. As of this writing, no NOTAM has been issued. DCM will raise the issue at his next meeting with MOGJ Minister Olga Golcher.

MEETING WITH CANADIAN OFFICIALS

¶4. (SBU) NAS and DHS/CBP met with Daniel Perrier of the Canadian Border Services Agency to discuss issues related to Panama's Customs Service and the Guabala inter-agency checkpoint on the Pan American Highway. The Canadians agreed with us that Panamanian Customs is overly focused on revenue collection and needs to focus more on enforcement. NAS is in a position to support additional CBP-led training programs on the enforcement side. The Canadians concurred with us that the GOP needs to dedicate resources to the Guabala checkpoint as well as develop a plan for rotational leadership at the site. We agreed to jointly reiterate that message to the MOGJ.

NEW INITIATIVES WITH NATIONAL AIR SERVICE

¶5. (U) Two DYNCORP instructors working for INL Air Wing (INL/A) in Colombia visited Panama to provide maintenance pilot training to the National Air Service (SAN). The training was coordinated through INL/A, and DYNCORP provided the instructors at no cost. We hope this is the start of a regular exchange of pilot and mechanic

training between Colombia and Panama. We are planning to invite SAN and National Maritime Service (SMN) officials to INL/A at Patrick AFB in September to discuss additional training possibilities.

CEREMONIES AND CONFERENCES

16. (U) We received prominent press coverage of the graduation ceremony for close to forty senior-level National Police (PNP) officers in the NAS-financed police management course led by the Southern Police Institute (SPI) of the University of Louisville. Strong GOP support for our ongoing police modernization program was evinced by the participation of Minister Golcher in the graduation. The DCM presided over a well-publicized donation ceremony for roughly \$148,000 in computer equipment for our crime mapping and analysis program (INCRIDEFA). NAS provided financial support to the Attorney General's Office to host an OAS/CICAD experts' meeting on combating maritime-based trafficking. EATON